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Relics of Marie Antoinette.



O many people are writing nowadays! I recall being introduced last winter to a Dr. Williamson, an Englishman. The friend who introduced me whispered in my ear, "author"—"catalogue"—"miniatures;" so I promptly said to Dr. Williamson that his name was a familiar one to me.

"Well, you know, when a man has written over thirty books, you can't very well help having heard of him," he replied glibly. Afterwards I learned that he was Dr. G. C. Williamson, who writes on art and is the author of the catalogue of Mr. Morgan's collection of miniatures. My friend, however, forgot to whisper anything to Dr. Williamson about me. In consequence he was not obliged to confess to any familiarity with my name, or with the classics that I hammered out on my typewriter.

Dr. Williamson is said by the London "Times" to be preparing a catalogue of the Gower collection of Marie Antoinette relics.

THE LOTUS According to the "Times" Lord Ronald Sutherland Gower has long been known not only as an ardent collector of portraits and other documents relating to Marie Antoinette, but as far back as 1883 published through Quantin in Paris an "Iconographie de la Reine Marie Antoinette," which has since remained the standard book of reference on the subject. His own collection was in some respects unique, and the "Times" claims authority for stating that it has just been acquired en bloc by Mr. Morgan. The relics are so numerous that only a full catalogue can do them justice. The one which will appeal most strongly to the popular imagination is a beautifully decorated fan, the only piece of the young Archduchess's personal property left to her when she entered French territory. At the frontier she had just exchanged her own apparel for the French clothing provided for her, but she retained her fan, which she handed to the leader of the company of maidens who went out from Strassburg to meet her; it was carefully preserved in the family, one of whom married the Prince D'Henin, and the Princess D'Henin gave it to Lord Ronald Gower in the early '60s in Paris and told him

at the same time the whole story of its history.



ANOTHER relic of twofold historic interest is the alabaster bust of Marie Antoinette which was one of the very few things which the Empress Eugénie brought away with her when she fled from the Tuileries, and she herself gave it to Lord Ronald Gower at Chislehurst in 1877. It had been discovered hidden away in Marie Antoinette's room in the Tuileries after the mob had broken in, and it was always kept on the Empress Eugénie's writing table. On the occasion of her giving it to Lord Ronald the Empress swept it off the table by accident, as it caught in her long sleeves. Lord Ronald hastened to save it, but before he could do so it had fallen on the floor and the head had come off, severed almost as neatly as with a knife. The Empress held up her hands in horror and exclaimed: "Poor Queen! She never had a fair chance!"

Two books bearing the arms of Marie Antoinette are from her own library: one is of fashions and the other of devotions; these were obtained in Paris from the descendants of one

THE of the officials who had taken possession of them.
LOTUS From a similar source came an étui which had belonged to the Queen and has a representation of her on horseback after a picture by Duplessis. The Queen's lorgnette is another well attested relic. It came into the possession of the Comte du Vaudreuil, who was one of the attendants on Marie Antoinette. He gave it to Mrs. Sturt of Nun Appleton, great-aunt of Mrs. Leveson-Gower of Titsey. A document appointing a laundress to Marie Antoinette and the Dauphin is signed by the Queen in full and countersigned after her execution by an official of the republic into whose hands it came. Marie Antoinette's winding wheel is another of the many personal relics. This came to the possession of Mme. de Clermont-Tonnerre and from her to the late owner. Its full history is written on the back.



THERE is a complete collection, so far as is known, of the medals bearing the representation of Marie Antoinette and of Louis XVI; one in gold is unique; all are contemporary and genuine; in one or two places the medals have been intentionally mutilated by those who were

in bitter opposition to the Queen, and these medals are regarded as of great rarity and peculiar interest. Another precious souvenir is an octagonal profile miniature of Marie Antoinette in enamel, having engraved at the back "Pleurez et vengez-la;" this was given to Lord Ronald at Windsor Castle; it had served as a brooch to a royalist lady who had come over to the castle. Two miniature groups represent Louis XVI and his family, the one a painting in color on ivory and the other a drawing in black and white. Another relic is a medal representing the execution of Marie Antoinette, and a scarlet "bloody" glass of the same; the glass medallion is of the kind that was carefully cherished by her supporters, but it has been mutilated intentionally by some one of the opposite party. Yet another is a lock of the Queen's hair set in a crystal and silver mount—this was given to Lord Ronald by George Augusta Sala.

In addition to the Marie Antoinette relics there are others of Napoleonic interest, notably the glove and sandal belonging to Princess Paulina Borghese, and given by her to the second Duke of Sutherland in Rome as a souvenir; a very fine antique Greek brooch of solid gold,



THE found at Pompeii and presented by Caroline,
LOTUS Queen of Naples, to the first Duke of Sutherland
at Frohsdorf; and one of the only two remain-
ing wine glasses (the other was presented to
the late Baroness Burdett-Coutts) which had
belonged to Mme. Méro are also among the rel-
ics.

